

remain focused and dedicated to ending the genocide and healing the wounds of a prolonged civil war. Justice must be served on those who perpetrated these heinous immoral crimes and we must help rebuild and restore the lives of the people who, through the grace of God, survive this hellish civil war.

After the systematic genocide of the Holocaust, we said never again. After the horrors of Rwanda and the Kosovo we committed ourselves to preventing genocide before it surfaced elsewhere. Sadly, we are to add Darfur to this list. It is long past time for the United Nations to become involved in Sudan. The U.N. needs to deploy a robust and sizable international mission to end the genocide and then work to bring peace to the Sudan. President Bush was right last week to suggest that it may be time to override the objections of the Sudanese government in order to send international peacekeepers into Darfur. After his speech to the U.N., Bush said, "[T]here's genocide taking place in Sudan. . . . Now is the time for the U.N. to act."

I call on the President to continue to push for action on this issue with world leaders, internationalize the response, and advocate in the United Nations to end the genocide in Darfur. I pray that the suffering will soon end, and that we will not soon forget our brothers and sisters in Africa.

STATEMENT ON H. RES. 759

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 2006

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 759, a resolution that expresses the sense of Congress that the Government of Japan should formally issue an apology for the sexual enslavement of young women during the imperial occupation of Asia and World War II. I am disappointed that this non-controversial resolution was not on the suspension calendar this week.

The dehumanization suffered by over 200,000 "comfort women" in Asia before and during World War II is one of the greatest and most averted tragedies of the 20th century. These women were ordinary and innocent civilians, ranging from young girls who had barely reached adolescence, to married women with children at home. These women shared in common, coercion into sex slavery by the Japanese Imperial Army.

Equally disturbing is Japan's modern and democratic government's refusal to issue a formal apology for this atrocity. I believe these women deserve a clear and unambiguous apology and reparations from the Japanese government to recognize the fact that their personal dignity was ripped from them.

In 1999, when I served in the California State Assembly, I authored Assembly Joint Resolution 27, which called on Congress to urge the Japanese government to issue an apology for the victims of the Rape of Nanking, comfort women, and POWs who were used as slave laborers. The resolution was ultimately passed, and urged Congress to pass similar legislation.

Now, 7 years after the success of AJR27, I stand united with my colleagues in support of H. Res. 759. I commend my good friend LANE

EVANS for his tireless work on this issue, and I thank him for his courage and leadership. I look forward to carrying on his work and legacy after his retirement this year.

Given the wide bipartisan support for this resolution, as evidenced by its 55 co-sponsors; the endorsement of four major caucuses, the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues, the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, and the Congressional Caucus on Korea; and its non-controversial language and recent passage by Unanimous Consent out of the House International Relations Committee, I simply cannot accept that H. Res. 759 is too controversial or lacks the importance to be on the suspension calendar.

It is only right that we provide justice for the victims of the Pacific theater with the same fervor as we did for those in the European theater of WWII. Congress has a moral duty to shed light on this issue and pass H. Res. 759 in order to send a powerful message to the government of Japan, and I am disappointed that this resolution is being ignored.

Mr. Speaker, Congress must not politicize a resolution that will give some peace of mind to the comfort women and those who have worked so hard on their behalf. I sincerely hope that H. Res. 759 will be brought to the House floor under suspension of the rules. In the name of historical reconciliation and human rights, moving this resolution forward is the right thing to do. We must hasten the day when the comfort women achieve the justice they deserve at last.

HONORING GRANDPARENT- AND OTHER RELATIVE-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS

HON. JOHN L. MICA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 2006

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, today, I am pleased to honor the grandparent- and other relative-headed households who have sacrificed to care for our Nation's children when the parents are unable to.

Across the country there are more than 6 million minors living in grandparent- or other relative-headed households. Regardless of the reason children enter relative care—death of a parent, neglect, abuse, military deployment or poverty—it is never the fault of the child. I commend grandparents and other relatives who step forward to care for these children, keeping the children out of foster care while providing safe and stable homes, often at great personal sacrifice. Supportive programs like subsidized guardianship help children exit foster care into the permanent care of nurturing relatives.

In my state of Florida, 9 percent of the children live with non-parent relatives. Grandparents and other relative caregivers are often the best chance for a loving and stable childhood for the children in their care, but their hard work and dedication often go unnoticed.

Mr. Speaker, today I offer my formal acknowledgment and deepest appreciation for the ongoing service of these caregivers to our country and our Nation's most valuable asset, our children. I ask all Members of the House of Representatives to join me in recognizing these everyday heroes.

PUBLIC EXPRESSION OF RELIGION ACT OF 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 26, 2006

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I oppose the so-called "Public Expression of Religion Act of 2006," H.R. 2679. This bill would send a chilling message to those who seek to uphold the Constitution and protect the religious liberty granted by the Constitution. Further, by denying aggrieved parties the existing remedies, this bill would embolden those who try to impose their religious beliefs on others to take additional risk and further violate the Constitution.

H.R. 2679 seeks to amend, for the first time, the Civil Rights Act of 1871, which is our Nation's oldest civil rights law. This bill would fundamentally alter the way individuals seek redress from violations of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. Worse, this bill is a solution in search of a problem.

What we are discussing goes to the very heart of one of the essential principles enshrined in the Constitution and documents of the founding of America principles: the separation between church and state. Two of our Founding Fathers, James Madison and Thomas Jefferson, spent almost 10 years debating this central issue in the Virginia State Legislature. Yet, today, the Republican Majority has allowed it to be debated only for a single hour on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives. Such an important change to the constitutional rights of Americans should receive thorough review by the House.

This legislation would bar parties who successfully assert their constitutional right to bring a case under the Establishment Clause from receiving attorney's fees. Under the Civil Rights Attorney's Fees Award Act of 1976, successful plaintiffs are awarded attorneys fees if their civil rights have been denied by government officials. This remedy was intended to make the government think twice about acting in manner that would infringe upon constitutionally protected rights.

However, we are considering legislation that would strip a remedy for plaintiffs who assert that the government infringed upon their religious freedoms.

This legislation is opposed by the Interfaith Alliance, American Civil Liberties Union, Americans United for the Separation of Church and State, Association of Trial Lawyers of America, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, National Council of Jewish Women, American Jewish Committee, Jewish Council for Public Affairs, Union for Reform Judaism, National Partnership for Women and Families, National Woman's Law Center, Secular Coalition for America, People for the American Way, Friends Committee on National Legislation and Baptist Joint Committee on Religious Liberty.

The Establishment Clause of the First Amendment protects all Americans from government endorsement of, or favoritism toward, specific religion, or any religion. Its protection extends only as far as it can be enforced, however. We limit the ability of citizens, churches, and other organizations to challenge the government at our own peril. The Establishment Clause was written not only to ensure